

Deja Vu

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Summary: Astrid had everything planned out. She knew what she was supposed to do. And yet Hiccup had changed her perfect plan drastically by leaving Berk that day. Changes of plan were needed; unfortunately, they were not going to please Hiccup in any way...
Oneshot. Pre-HTTYD2. HTTYD (c) Dreamworks Animation.

Deja Vu

Astrid sighed, and the wind sighed along with her.

She stood there, with her hands on her hips. _Dragon races starts in a few hours. There's still time, _she reassured in thought, she threw Stormfly a leg of chicken. Stormfly indulged in it eagerly. As Stormfly was busily eating, Astrid took the time to survey the area, noting the few faces in the empty stadium.

Fishlegs is still here. Snotlout is, sadly, also here. The twins are present. Stoick's not here yet, but that's expected. He's probably in the great hall.

And of course, Hiccup is nowhere to be seen.

Lately, Hiccup was off exploring new lands, charting undiscovered islands on his dragon, Toothless. He was often gone for half the day, and never told anyone when he was leaving. He'd even fashioned an outfit for himself, complete with a compass and numerous other fancy gadgets for his cartography. She sometimes wondered what went on in his head these days.

However, today he had promised her that he wouldn't leave Berk. He promised that he'd stay to watch her in the races today. So where was he?

Astrid saw Gobber approaching in the distance. She walked over to him. _Perhaps he knows where he'd gone._

"You looking for Hiccup?" Gobber said, without even a mere glance at her, when she was at close proximity.

Astrid laid her words down carefully. "Yes...how did you know?"

Gobber threw her a questioning look. "Are ya putting up some guise or something? 'Cause I thought ya knew -"

"Shh! Not yet." Astrid cast a side glance at Fishlegs and the twins, who were joking around, laughing at Snotlout's helmet, which had caught on fire. Then she whispered in Gobber's ear.

"Oh." Gobber nodded understandingly, then winked. "Well, I suppose you do have a point. I saw Hiccup pass his house. Go find him there."

"Thanks. Stormfly?" The Nadder perked up upon hearing her name. "We're leaving." She acknowledged Gobber with a smile. "See you at the races, then."

Gobber waved at her as she departed.

The Haddock household looked lonely today. _It always looks lonely, _she reminded herself. Already she suspected that Hiccup wasn't there. She was right.

"Where are you?" she whispered to herself. Her patience was running out quickly. She patted Stormfly on the head. "Sorry, girl, but I'm afraid we're not racing today."

Stormfly let out a noise that could be described as a whine.

"Stormfly, we can always race tomorrow. Besides," she added, "I think it's time to let one of the others win, for a change."

Stormfly jerked her head suddenly. "What is it?" Astrid asked.

The Deadly Nadder took off into full sprint. She stopped suddenly, skidding in front of a building. Her house.

Astrid shook her head. "Stormfly, I'm not giving you any more chicken -"

And Stormfly took off to the skies.

Her wings were beating against the air with powerful strokes. Astrid opened her closed eyes, not aware that she had shut them. Her hair threatened to become loose, and her bangs were covering her view. She brushed them away impatiently and squinted.

Oh no.

A figure was heading towards the direction of the Great Hall. An intruder.

"Stormfly, turn around!" she shouted. Stormfly swerved quickly, slicing the air, then proceeded to dive. _So it's going to be this

way. _A smile played on her lips. _Fine by me. I like races._

The rider increased speed. _Oh no you don't. _"Stormfly, can you be just a little bit faster?" She complied, and Astrid felt her stomach lurch as she was pulled forward.

She was closing in on her target. The world was reduced to a blur as she zipped along the treetops. Stormfly prepared to strike, claws on both her feet extended and ready to snatch up the man.

"Now!" she yelled, and Stormfly swooped in, plucking Hiccup up from the shoulders neatly.

Hiccup emitted a pure sound of surprise. "What in the name of—" he sputtered. He glanced up, and his eyes widened. "_Astrid?_"

"Hmm?" she replied nonchalantly, purposefully avoiding his glare and instead focusing her attention on Toothless, who was tilting his head to the side, as if questioning her motives. The altitude started to climb as Stormfly ascended upwards, and Toothless was reduced to a spot.

"Astrid, this isn't about me not being there for your race, is it? Because I have an explanation for that—"

"No, no." She waved the notion off. "This is about _revenge_. "

"Revenge for _what, exactly?_" His voice shook with the turbulence of his ride.

Astrid placed a hand onto her forehead, slapping it with force.
"Don't you remember?"

"Remember _what_?" an exasperated Hiccup said.

"Three years ago?"

Hiccup was lost in thought for a moment. Then a look of realization dawned onto his face.

"You're not still mad about _that, are you?" he laughed weakly.

Astrid pulled off a menacing smile. "Of course I am. Stormfly, drop."

Hiccup fell, thrashing his lanky arms wildly. His hair was slapping himself on the face. _What did I do wrong now? _Then he felt strong claws catch him gently.

"You going to say it or what?" Astrid's voice drifted down to him.

"Great," he said, layering on sarcasm. "Now you're talking in riddles. You're sounding like Gothi." He twisted in Stormfly's grip.
"Would you let me go now?"

"Nope." Astrid lowered Hiccup onto a bough of an evergreen tree. Hiccup dangled there, arms hugging the limb tightly, muscles

strained. "Listen, Astrid, there must be a misunderstanding here. I don't know what you're doing, but I really want to get down."

"You're not getting down. I'm not letting you," Astrid said matter-of-factly.

"Astrid." He addressed her name with a commanding tone.

She shook her head.

"Asstttrid," he pouted, stretching the corners of his mouth like a whiny child.

Astrid laughed. "Cute, but no."

Hiccup rummaged through his mind for ideas, and found none. He stared up at her pleadingly.

Her face softened, but that was about it. "If you really wanted to know," she said, playing with a strand of her hair absentmindedly, "then you have to say it. I'll tell you right after that."

"Astrid, if you don't tell me now - " he paused, inhaling a sharp intake of breath, "then I won't come to your next dragon race. And believe me, I won't accept any begging or bartering or -or-" He sighed. "You get the idea." He instantly regretted his threat. Well, that was lame. She's not going to take it seriously._

Astrid stopped her finger rotation, the strand of hair unraveling from her index finger. "You're...not coming to my race?"

"No," he said, trying to make it sound definite.

"And you're not going to accept any words of apology?"

"Nope. I'm not going to listen to anything you have to say."

She blinked. "Okay then." And her hand reached out towards him.

Hiccup lifted his head, examining her expression, then lowered his head back down to her outstretched hand, uncertainty woven into his features.

"Well, go on." Her voice cut through his thoughts.

Hiccup carefully grabbed her hand. It was warm to the touch. Astrid helped propel him up onto Stormfly's back.

"Okay, Stormfly," she whispered so that only the Nadder could hear her. "Just like we practiced."

Stormfly launched herself into the open skies. Hiccup suppressed a scream.

"Hang on tight!" Astrid yelled over the wind excitedly. Hiccup's arms flailed helplessly, his hands searching desperately for a hold. They eventually made their way to her back, and he hung onto her, not daring to let go.

"I'm sorry. She's not usually like this," Astrid told him in a sing-song voice.

Hiccup's stomach lurched, and his heart felt like it was in his mouth. Wind was blasting over his eyeballs and his teeth clenched. Stormfly was performing a drop, diving towards the water.

Water? !

"Hope you don't mind taking a bath!"

"What- of course I do! It'll stain my outfit!"

Stormfly didn't listen and kept on. Hiccup braced himself for the coldness that was sure to come.

Spray peppered his face and lips, hydrating his dry skin. He breathed in the calming scent of fresh air and felt the warming sensation of the sun on his back. He lowered his hand onto the surface, the water barely grazing his wrist and leaving behind trails of fine mist.

"And nowâ€| the loop-de-loops!" she cried ecstatically. Stormfly shot back up enthusiastically.

"Oh no. No-" His body was wrenched from side to side. Hiccup was overcome with vertigo. "Stop, please-" And then he realized something.

"Wait, are you-"

"Thank you for nothing, you useless reptile," Astrid lowered her voice, imitating Hiccup's.

He knew what he had to say. "I'm sorry!" he cried hoarsely, genuinely. "I'm sorry for not coming to your race today, I was too caught up with my own discoveries and I should have listened to you and -"

He felt her hand on his lips, silencing him. The spinning in his head ceased as Stormfly cast out her wings, establishing a stable flight. The wind blew past them, a slight breeze that nullified his senses and made him feel lethargic.

She approached him with a tentative voice. "Youâ€| you can open your eyes now."

Hiccup opened them and was greeted by the radiant sunset. The sky was decorated with mellow oranges and pinks fading into an indigo night. He released his grip on her back slightly. Hiccup watched a group of Monstrous Nightmares fly off into the distance, and rested his weary head onto Astrid's shoulders.

All the stress and worries that had accumulated within himself were blown away. Night ascended quickly, and as if on cue, the inky black sky blossomed streaks of violet and green. _Just like last time, _he thought, nostalgia beginning to threaten his eyes to leak.

"It'sâ€|" He was at loss for words. "It's beautiful." Hiccup turned his attention to Astrid and gave her a soft smile. "You're beautiful

as well, m'lady."

"You're not so bad yourself," she whispered to him, interlocking her hand with his. She caressed Stormfly's head fondly with her spare hand. "You did well today." Stormfly chittered with pleasure.

The landing was smooth and swift. Hiccup jumped off, reaching out a helping hand. Astrid accepted it with no words spoken.

Hiccup stood there, examining his reflection in the starry water. He managed a weak punch on her arm when she wasn't paying attention. She rubbed at it. "I got you down, didn't I?" she complained.

"That's for kidnapping me," he replied. He leaned in and gave her a quick peck on the cheek. "And that's for everything else."

Astrid lingered for a while, cherishing the moment. Then she motioned to Hiccup. "Come on. I'll give you a ride back." He complied.

The flight back was silent, except for a few "You sure you know where Toothless is?" and "What were you doing out here in the first place?" Astrid had sat through the awkward silence, not daring to break it, but at the same time wanting to. Instead, she focused on the weight of Hiccup's hands on her back.

Toothless greeted Hiccup by licking his face eagerly. "Slow down, bud," he laughed. "Nice to see you too." Hiccup wiped his face and clambered on. "Race you back!" he yelled. And he was gone before she could react.

She shook her head, smiling. "Come on, Stormfly. We'll beat him." And she set off, the flapping of wings lifting up dust in sporadic patterns.

Astrid beat him by a mere two seconds. "You know I waited for you, don't you?" Hiccup kidded, swinging himself off the saddle.

"Of course you did," Astrid stated dryly. "Oh, hey wait," she caught him by the arm as he prepared to leave.

"Hmm?"

"The chief wants to see you," she said hurriedly. "In the great hall."

"Oh. Okay. So, where are you going?"

"Umâ€| " she scratched her neck, trying to appear indecisive and shy. "I'd thought that I'd go with you. If that's alright."

He shrugged. "Sure, why not?"

They reached the great hall. Hiccup opened the door as Astrid held her breath. Then -

_Whoosh! _Meatlug shot out, and Hiccup jumped, landing shakily on his prosthetic leg.

Fishlegs chuckled awkwardly. "She meant to say 'Surprise'."

"Surprise!" Voices clamoured simultaneously, causing a racket. Hiccup could barely hear over the din.

"Surprise?" Hiccup went in, and was indeed surprised to see the gang, their dragons, all the Vikings in Berk, and his father sitting there.

Astrid punched him lightly on the arm. "It's your birthday, you numbskull."

"My-what?"

"Your birthday," Tuffnut and Ruffnut both chimed. "Hey I was going to say that!" Ruffnut argued. "You just made that up!" Tuffnut barked back.

Stoick advanced, placing a heavy hand onto his shoulder. "Happy Birthday, son," he boomed.

"Actually, my birthday's on the 29th -"

"Of course it is. How can I not know my own son's birthdate?"

"It's February 28th, and we couldn't celebrate your eighteenth birthday on the 29th, could we?" Astrid explained. "It's not a leap year, Hiccup. That happened two years ago."

"Technically, I'm only three years old then."

The residents of the room laughed. "He sure acts like one," Snotlout deadpanned. "He doesn't even remember his own birthday!"

"Ah, give 'im a break, Snotlout, " Gobber interjected. "It's his birthday, after all." He winked at Hiccup slyly.

"Enough with this bicker. We didn't waste all the time preparing just to have the remaining time wasted." Stoick's voice resonated against the walls. "Let's get the festivities started!"

As the rest of the Vikings went off to eat, Hiccup turned to Astrid, who wore an unreadable expression. "Wait. Are you telling me that your kidnapping was just to create a _diversion_?"

A corner of her mouth creased. "Not really, no. I was going to distract you by asking you to watch me at the races." She gave him a knowing smile. "But there was a 'um' hiccup in my original plan."

"I'm sorry for not attending your race, really." Hiccup bit his lip. _Great. Another wonderful sentence, as told by Hiccup Horrendous Haddock the Third. _How about...um'_ a night flight? You know, to'_ ah'_" Hiccup's hands made rotating gestures as his brain struggled to formulate the right words.

"To what?"

"To'um' you know, to payback your favour." Hiccup sighed in relief, glad he didn't mess up anything.

"I suppose a night flight would be wonderful," Astrid admitted. Then a crashing sound broke the silence. Bedlam broke out.

"That sounds like something a future chief would handle, doesn't it?"

Hiccup walked toward the source of the noise, turning a corner. "Please don't remind me," he groaned inwardly. Then his head snapped back. "Sorry, I forgot. There's something I want to say."

Astrid nodded. "Go on."

He smiled one last time before his head disappeared from view. "Thank you."

And all she could do was smile back.

End
file.